

TREASURY DEPARTMENT
Washington

FOR RELEASE, MORNING PAPERS,
Wednesday, March 14, 1945.

Press Service
No. 45-45

STATEMENT OF THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT ON INVASION CURRENCY

The wide geographical scope of military operations in this war and the great development of techniques of economic warfare have made money an important offensive and defensive weapon of war. Providing this weapon in its most efficient form has required careful and detailed planning far in advance of military operations. Just as we need many varieties of military weapons, of ships and of planes, so we have found that the effective conduct of war on the financial side requires a variety of currency measures designed to meet varied and changeable situations. This memorandum explains some of the principal currency measures which have been carried out during this war.

1. Keeping Dollars from the Axis

Even before we entered the war, this Government, through the Foreign Funds Control of the Treasury Department, took steps to prevent the Axis from using American currency which it looted when it overran the countries of Western Europe and other territories. If we had taken no protective measures, the Germans would have been enabled to use freely the dollars they looted in Holland, in Belgium, in France, and elsewhere, to buy critical war materials in the United States or in other markets, to finance propaganda and espionage, and for a host of other activities constituting an important part of the Axis total war. The strength of the dollar and its universal acceptability throughout the world made it of particular importance that we take steps to prevent use of this currency by the Axis. What we did in substance was to say that no one would be permitted to import dollars into the United States unless he could prove that the dollars were not looted by the Axis. We could not stop trading in dollars in foreign countries entirely, but we did serve notice on anyone who bought the dollar bill anywhere in the world that before he or anyone to whom he might pass the dollar note could bring it into the United States and use it for purchases here, he would have to prove that the dollar did not pass through Axis hands. These measures went a long way in accomplishing their purpose. The Axis realized far less from the dollars they stole than otherwise.

When the Japanese descended upon the Philippines, we were able to take even more effective measures. While the Japanese were still marching toward Manila, we invited people to deposit all dollar and Philippine peso currency they had with the American authorities, against receipt. Careful records were made of the currency so received, and the records are in Washington today. When the defense of the Philippines became hopeless, we burned the currency to make sure that the Japanese would not get it.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii became a danger spot in our defenses, and we could not be blind to the possibility that the Japanese might attempt to invade the Islands, as, indeed, they evidently intended to do when we stopped them at Midway. As a defensive measure, we introduced the Hawaiian dollar, which is simply regular United States currency with the word "Hawaii" overprinted in large letters. We exchanged all regular dollar currency in Hawaii for Hawaiian dollars, and we were then ready for the Japanese from the point of view of money. Had the Japanese conquered Hawaii, the distinctive Hawaiian currency would have made it possible to take appropriate measures to prevent the enemy from using this currency to any advantage. In 1943 and early 1944, the Hawaiian dollar was put to further use in the occupation of certain Japanese-held islands in the Pacific, for the convenience of our naval personnel, since they operated out of Pearl Harbor. More recently, since our successes in the Pacific have removed all danger of an invasion of Hawaii, we have discontinued issuing Hawaiian dollars and are gradually withdrawing these dollars from circulation by replacing them with regular currency as they are turned in to banks.

2. U. S. Military Disbursements in the United Kingdom

Large American forces have been in Great Britain at all times since the early days of our participation in the war. These men had to be paid, and the Army and Navy had to make incidental expenditures for their maintenance and for other military purposes not covered by reverse lend-lease. The British Government did not want American dollars paid to our troops, and thus put into circulation on a large scale in Britain. British exchange control laws forbid the circulation of foreign currencies, and the use of American dollars for troop pay and other purposes would have broken down the British domestic and foreign exchange controls. Moreover, dollar payments would have been inconvenient for the men as well, since everything they might want to spend the money for was priced in terms of British currency. For these reasons, it was obviously undesirable to pay our men in dollars. In the United Kingdom we followed the usual practice, and the one that we followed in the last war; we bought British pounds from Britain and paid for them in American dollars. Then the British money was disbursed as net troop pay in Britain and for other purposes. No special problems arose because Britain was not an invaded country, the government was functioning normally, and banking facilities were readily available for this kind of exchange transaction.

It must be pointed out that in Great Britain as well as in all other parts of the world, whatever the currency arrangement may be, the soldier gets local currency only to the extent that he wants cash for local expenditures. Much the greater part of the soldier's pay is not drawn in cash at all. It is allotted to dependents of the soldier, it goes to pay premiums on insurance policies, it is sent to people in the United States in the form of personal remittances, it is deposited through Army facilities in American banks, and it is used to purchase war bonds. All of these transactions are carried out wholly in dollars. It is only the minor percentage of pay which the soldier wants in cash for expenditures in the

foreign country which is paid to him in foreign currency. If at any time a soldier finds that he has not spent all the foreign currency he drew, he can exchange what he has left, through Army facilities, for dollars to be sent to the United States as a remittance or for saving.

The same pattern has been followed in other lands, not occupied by the enemy, where our troops have gone in the course of the war. Thus, in Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, Iran, Iceland, and other far-flung places where our troops have gone to man the supply lines, we buy the local currency we need for dollars in the traditional manner.

3. Invasion Currency

When we prepared to invade enemy countries, and countries occupied by the enemy, we could not plan to use the procedure followed in Britain and other countries which have not been battlefields of the war. From the outside, we could not know with certainty what we would encounter in enemy-held territory. In Tunisia, the Germans flooded the territory with French francs, paid out with a lavish hand, in the hope of setting loose an uncontrollable inflation, as they did so much more thoroughly in Greece. In Sicily, the Germans ordered the banks to burn Italian currency before our forces arrived. We had to be ready to meet both these tactics, as well as others which have been used against us. We needed to assure our troops of necessary currency, without depending on local banks (because we might find banks destroyed, or unusable because their management's loyalty was questionable), without knowing whether civilian government would be in condition to permit normal business transactions, and without the opportunity (in the case of enemy and French territory) of making arrangements in advance with a recognized government. We had to anticipate the possibility that we would be required to provide currency for civilian needs, before local self-government could be re-established in liberated areas. Our assault forces would precede even a recognized government. We might find that the mayor of the first town liberated needed money urgently to keep his police force on the job, to hire laborers to clear the streets, or for a host of other work needed in the immediate wake of battle. Our supply officers needed an acceptable currency so they might purchase quickly and readily supplies and services which the Army might require of local civilians. It is obviously easier to hire a crew of laborers to unload ships if we pay them in cash at the end of each day, rather than give them receipts and tell them to submit their claims for future collection..

In our first invasion operation, North Africa, we used yellow seal dollars. Yellow seal dollars, like Hawaiian dollars, are regular American currency, with a distinguishing mark to permit segregation if the situation so requires. We simply substituted yellow ink for blue in printing the seal on regular silver certificates of the United States. We did not know whether we would be welcomed as allies or resisted as invaders; we could not be certain that we would not incur reverses. The yellow seal gave us the opportunity to segregate the currency if we should be driven from North Africa. The yellow seal also gave us the opportunity to distinguish this currency from regular United States currency which we found in circulation in North Africa on our arrival there. In administering

our controls designed to keep the Axis from realizing on looted dollars, we were able to permit the yellow seal currency to be imported into the United States with less necessity of control than regular currency, which might have been looted by our enemies.

We stopped issuing yellow seal dollars in North Africa within a few months after our arrival there, and have succeeded in withdrawing almost all from circulation. When we planned to change over to the use of regular North African banknotes, we found that the French in North Africa had neither the paper, ink, nor printing facilities to supply the demand for local currency. Thus the French currency finally put to use in place of the yellow seal dollar was actually printed by a private firm in the United States, for the North African issuing banks. If General Eisenhower's invading forces had not carried a supply of currency, there would have been an actual physical shortage of money for the circulation required in North Africa. The new North African currency made possible a prompt currency conversion by the French authorities after the Nazis were expelled from Tunisia, thus stemming the inflation the Germans tried to create.

In planning for the invasion of Italy, we had another important consideration in mind. We did not want to pay our men in dollar currency, and thus turn dollar claims against the United States into general circulation in an enemy country. After the last war, our Army of Occupation made gross disbursements of almost \$300,000,000 in Germany, most of it by cashing dollar checks for marks at German banks, and by paying out actual dollars to our troops. These dollars were never recovered. We filed a claim for our net costs of occupation, and we have been no more successful in collecting than have the European reparation claimants against Germany. By using an invasion currency assimilated to the currency of the occupied territory, we can keep the dollars pending final settlement rather than give them to the enemy.

In the first few weeks of the Sicilian operation, we used yellow seal dollars, as in North Africa. While preparations were under way for months in advance to use the Allied Military lira, we did not want to print the word "Italy" or the word "lire" until the world knew where the Allied armies would strike. We discontinued issuing yellow seal dollars in Sicily within a short time, and, as in North Africa, have since succeeded in withdrawing the bulk of this currency from circulation.

The AM lira, which has been used ever since in Italy, is not a currency of the United States in any sense. It is an Italian currency, originally declared legal tender in Italy by the occupying Allied armies acting as the military government of occupied Italy. Under settled international law, the military governor of occupied enemy territory can make laws for the territory, with the full governmental authority. Thus, the Supreme Court of the United States has said:

"The right of one belligerent to occupy and govern the territory of the ~~enemy~~ while in its military possession, is one of the incidents of war, and flows directly from the right to conquer. We, therefore, do not look to the Constitution or political institutions of the conqueror, for authority to establish a government for the territory of the enemy in his possession, during its military occupation, nor for the rules by which the powers of such governments are regulated and limited. Such authority and such rules are derived directly from the laws of war, as established by the usage of the world, and confirmed by the writings of publicists and decisions of courts--in fine from the law of nations. *** The municipal laws of a conquered territory, or the laws which regulate private rights, continue in force during military occupation, except so far as they are suspended or changed by the acts of the conqueror. *** He, nevertheless, has all the powers of a de facto government, and can at his pleasure either change the existing laws or make new ones." Dooley v. United States, 182 U.S. 222 (1901).

The military governor declared AM lira to be legal tender in Italy, and thereby made the currency equivalent to and assimilated with the previously issued regular Italian lira. AM lira contains no promise of redemption on the part of the Allied forces, and the currency has in every way been made part of the currency issue of Italy. The Italian Government made the AM lira legal tender as one of its first official acts after its arrival in liberated territory in September 1943.

The Allied Military lira, while printed in the United States, was not issued by the United States. It was issued by the Allied Military Commander of the Mediterranean Theater, acting for the armies under his command, British and American, with contingents of other countries. The printing could just as well have been done in Brazil or India; we did it here because we had the printing facilities.

Our preparations for D-Day, for the invasion of Western Europe, were simpler in two respects. First, we had legally recognized governments-in-exile with which we could deal, in the case of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Second, plans for an invasion of Western Europe were publicly announced, and the currencies for all of the occupied Western European countries were produced simultaneously.

The allied forces landed on the Normandy beaches with "supplemental francs". This currency was printed in the United States, because printing facilities were available here, in agreement with the British Government and after consultation with the French Committee of National Liberation. Subsequently, the French Committee, which was successively recognized as the de facto authority in France and as the Provisional Government of the French Republic, assumed responsibility for the issue of all the supplemental francs used since D-Day. Our arrangements with the French authorities thus are the same as the arrangements with Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, made before D-Day.

The Belgian Government in London had prepared a new issue of Belgian currency which was printed at its order in England. The Belgians were asked to advance to General Eisenhower as much of this new Belgian money as might be needed by the liberating armies. We undertook to pay the Belgian Government in dollars for any expenditures made by the American forces for net troop pay or for certain other strictly military purposes not covered by reverse lend-lease. Any advances made toward the conduct of normal civilian affairs in Belgium would be for the account of the Belgian Government, and we would not be expected to reimburse the Belgians.

Netherlands currency was printed privately in Canada at the order of the Netherlands Government-in-Exile, and similarly was supplied to General Eisenhower. The new Luxembourg currency was printed both in Britain and in the United States.

The availability of a new currency for each of these liberated countries provided a necessary monetary instrument, necessary both for the military forces of liberation and for the government of the liberated country. Thus, the Belgian Government, after its re-establishment in Brussels, called in all old high denomination Belgian currency circulating, and made the new notes the only legal tender. This was done as part of a financial program designed to reduce the inflated currency circulation imposed on the Belgians by the Germans and to help stabilize the Belgian economy.

In the Pacific theatre, we followed the same procedure in our arrangements with the Dutch Government for military operations in the Netherlands Indies. The forces of General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz were armed with Netherlands Indies guilders prepared upon the order of and issued by the Netherlands Government supplied to General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz and paid for in dollars to the extent that they were used for net troop pay and other strictly military expenditures not covered by reverse lend-lease.

United States Army and Navy forces in the Philippines are using a new "Victory Series" of Philippine currency and a new 1944 series of Philippine coins prepared in anticipation of our return. The currency, as in pre-war days, was produced by the United States Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the coins were manufactured by the United States Mint, at the request of the Philippine Commonwealth Government. As in pre-war days, every two pesos of the new Philippine Treasury certificates is backed by one United States dollar on deposit in the United States, and in addition the Commonwealth maintains an exchange stabilization fund amounting to between 15 and 25% of the currency in circulation.

In each of the Allied countries, the invasion currency used was not in any sense a currency of the United States. It was provided by the local government of the liberated country itself, and such government or its central bank is solely responsible for the redemption of the currency. We pay in U. S. dollars for the foreign currency we use for net troop pay and certain other strictly military expenditures not covered by reverse lend-lease. The moment any such disbursements are made by Army Finance

officers, Washington is notified and the dollar amount is taken from the Army appropriation and set up in a special account in the Treasury. A similar procedure is followed with Navy expenditures. Thus, Congressional control over the size of Army and Navy appropriations is strictly maintained, Generals Eisenhower and MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz are supplied with ample local currency of the country in which they are operating and the Allied government is paid later when the accounts are balanced up.

As the picture changed in Italy, and Italy became a co-belligerent in our war against Germany, the AM lira demonstrated its usefulness. It was decided to make available to the Italian Government, for vital rehabilitation, the dollar equivalent of net American troop pay disbursements made in AM lira, thus following, in part, the pattern of our arrangements with our Allies. This action, taken in such a way as not to prejudice any ultimate financial settlement with Italy, is helping Italy today to share in the struggle to liberate Northern Italy.

The Allied Military mark has now been introduced in occupied areas of Germany by the Allied armies. It is being issued under the same conditions as provided the basis for the original issuance of AM lire.

4. Who Will Redeem These Currencies?

When invasion currencies were first put to use by the Allied forces the question was frequently raised, "Who will redeem these currencies?" Writers in various popular periodicals, as well as financial journals, speculated from time to time as to whether the United States did or did not intend to redeem invasion currencies, or whether some other government or agency did or did not intend to do so.

All of this speculation about whether or not the United States will "redeem" such currencies arises from a fundamental misconception of their nature. The United States Government did not issue any of this invasion currency (except, of course, yellow seal and Hawaiian dollars, which, as pointed out above, are in every respect United States money), and therefore is under no obligation to "redeem" such currencies. No promise of redemption was ever made. No invasion currency carries any legend suggesting redemption by the United States. In fact the words "United States" do not appear on any of the invasion currencies at all. These currencies serve the same purpose of providing local means of payment as is served by the British sterling used to pay our troops in Britain and our obligation of redemption no more exists in the former case than in the latter.

Every local currency used by the Allied forces is issued by the authority of the lawful government of the country in which the currency is disbursed. Belgian, French and Dutch currencies used by our troops are issued by the lawful Belgian, French and Dutch Governments, just as the British pounds we use are issued by the British Governments. AM lire and AM marks are issued by the lawful governments of the portions of Italy and Germany occupied by the Allied forces; under international law the military commander of these areas is the lawful government. Due to the

destruction of Italian facilities, it has been necessary for the Allied Financial Agency to continue to make available AM lire, which has been made legal tender by the Italian Government in territory controlled by it, both for the needs of the Italian Government and the Allied forces.

Thus, it is perfectly clear that the United States has not obligated itself in any way to "redeem" any invasion currency issued in a foreign land, and we have no "secret understandings" that we will ever do so.

We have arranged to pay the Allied governments dollars equivalent to the net amount of invasion currency disbursed to our troops as pay and allowances in these foreign lands, as we pay dollars to the British when we buy sterling with which to meet our Army and Navy payrolls in the United Kingdom. Similarly, other strictly military expenditures originally effected in invasion currency in these Allied countries are also compensated in dollars to the Allied country whose currency we use, if they do not come within the scope of reverse lend-lease.

The local currency which is paid to our troops in foreign territories is furnished to the military forces by the governmental authority concerned. When the U. S. forces obtain a foreign currency for military expenditures, the relevant military appropriation is charged for the dollar equivalent thereof in the United States. In this manner the control of Congress over the expenditures of the U. S. military forces is maintained. The amounts of the dollar equivalent of the net troop pay and other strictly military expenditures not covered by reverse lend-lease which have been certified to the Treasury by the War and Navy Departments are paid to the Allied government concerned. In the case of Italy, we held the money in a suspense account until recently, when it was decided, in view of Italy's status as a co-belligerent, to make the net troop pay dollars available to the Italian Government for the purchase of necessary rehabilitation supplies in the United States, as pointed out above.

When our troops are paid in new Belgian francs supplied by the Belgian Government, they are getting the lawful currency of Belgium. Similarly, when they are paid in AM lire, they are getting a currency which is a lawful currency of Italy.

It is the same in each of the countries into which our armies have moved. Invasion currency is not something separate and apart from the currency of the country. It becomes, immediately upon issue, part of the currency of the country in which it is issued. We use the currency system we find for the needs of our troops, because that is the quickest and most efficient way of providing our armies with the money they need for carrying on their operations.

Our allies have followed similar procedures in providing currency for their military forces in foreign lands. The British used a British Military Authority note, denominated in pounds in their early operations in Africa; again, side by side with our yellow seal dollar, in North Africa and in the early weeks of the Sicilian operations; and, only a few

months ago, in the operations in Greece. The British joined us in the use of AM lire in Italy. British arrangements with the Western European countries for currency are much the same as ours. Canada is being supplied with francs and guilders in the same way. The Russian forces introduced a military lei in their invasion of Rumania, and are today using the same AM mark in eastern Germany as we are using on the Western Front. We have planned with our Allies for the use of money as well as for the use of other weapons of war.

oOo